

The Selection Process of National Park Landscape Areas and the Imaginative geographies in Taiwan during the Japanese Colonial Period

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This paper discusses the relationship between the selection process of national park landscapes and the imaginative geographies in Taiwan during the Japanese colonial period, focusing on the ambivalent and contradictory nature of modern spatiality. In 1937, three national parks were designated in Taiwan by the Taiwan Colonial Government: the The Tatun National Park, The Tsugitaka-Taroko National Park and The Niitaka-Ali Mountains National Park. In this selection, criteria used in choosing national parks in mainland Japan were directly applied to those in Taiwan, which was characterized by mountain landscapes; selecting the natural and majestic landscapes symbolising the great Japanese Empire was considered to flaunt Japanese superiority and attract tourists from all over the world. The selection was met with opposition that asserted distinctive characteristics of Taiwan in the tropical landscapes, which was also rare and thus attractive as a tourist site. Such opposition was however denied as suitability to the Japanese standard, benefits to health and wellbeing of the Japanese residents, and proximity to Taipei City were more of the priority, and furthermore, tourism potential was considered inappropriate in selecting national parks. The paper shows, in the dynamic process of the production of space for national parks in the colonial Taiwan, that the selection of Taiwanese national parks was related to the identity politics of spatial scale between Taiwan and Japan, and that the relations between nationalism and tourism were not always harmonious. The case exemplifies the intricate and volatile relationships between diverse elements such as landscapes, imaginative geographies, meanings, politics, tourism and special scales.

1. Introduction

It is pointed out that the landscapes of national parks in Japan before World War II were 'landscapes that had a close affinity with the nationalism that expressed the identity of the nation and its people', and the 'mountains, valleys and forests' were chosen as the 'landscapes that represent Japan'.¹⁾ However, when considering the role of the national parks as tourism space, it becomes necessary to focus on not only the issues related to the authenticity of these landscapes but also on issues related to difference and otherness. The ambivalent and contradictory nature of modern spatiality has been recently much discussed. For example, Lefebvre²⁾ pointed out that modern space is contradictory, seeking difference at the same time as homogenisation. This perspective is also important when considering the landscape of a national park.

Therefore, in this paper, I discuss a study on the selection process of national park landscape areas, focusing not only on the characteristics believed to reflect the central identity and the authenticity of a

nation and its people but also the features of 'otherness', which classify a national park as a tourism space. Furthermore, apart from considering the relationship between the landscape of a national park and the authority by analysing what the landscape represents, I study the dynamic process of how a national park is formed from the complex relationships among identity, power, image, emotion and material matter. In this paper, I examine the three national parks in Taiwan designated in 1937, when Taiwan, which extends across a subtropical to tropical zone, was under the period of the Japanese colonial rule that lasted from 1895 to 1945. In particular, I study the selection process of national parks in Taiwan while focusing on the correlation between the imaginative geographies of mountainous landscapes characterised by 'mountains, valleys and forests' and the imaginative geographies of tropical landscapes characterised by (sub)tropical vegetation.

Chapter II begins by detailing the selection process of the national park candidate areas in Taiwan and describes the characteristics of the

selected landscapes. Chapter III then investigates the various conflicts that arose from a controversial decision regarding the candidate areas for national parks in Taiwan. Lastly, Chapter IV studies the imaginative geographies of tropical and mountainous landscapes as national parks in Taiwan and their relationship with identity, tourism, power and emotion, finally considering how the nature of these relationships has evolved.

2. Selection process of national parks in Taiwan and characteristics of the process

(1) Selection process and tourism development of national parks

Before considering the characteristics of the selection process of national parks in Taiwan during the Japanese colonial period, I would first like to clarify the situation in Japan. In Japan, the initial movement for establishing national parks started in 1911, when the 27th Imperial Diet adopted three proposals or petitions related to the creation of national parks. The process progressed as a means of promoting national and local tourism, resulting in an investigation of national parks by the Health Department at the Ministry of Home Affairs Medical Bureau from 1920; the formation of a National Parks Investigation Committee in 1930; and the issuing of the National Parks Act in 1931. Then, in 1932, the National Parks Committee selected 12 candidate national park areas and designated them national parks in 1934 and 1936.³⁾

All the national parks designated by this process were on the mainland of Japan; the process for selecting national parks in colonies was different. The Taiwan Colonial Government launched the National Parks Investigation Committee in 1933 and implemented the National Parks Act in 1935. In 1936, the candidate national park areas were selected during the first meeting of the Taiwan National Parks Committee and, in 1937, three locations were designated national parks: The Tatun National Park, The Tsugitaka-Taroko National Park, and The Niitaka-Ali Mountains National Park (see Figure 1).

From the beginning, Niitaka-Ali Mountains received the most attention of the three national parks. Mount Ali, a logging industry area in a large forest and managed by the government, lay within

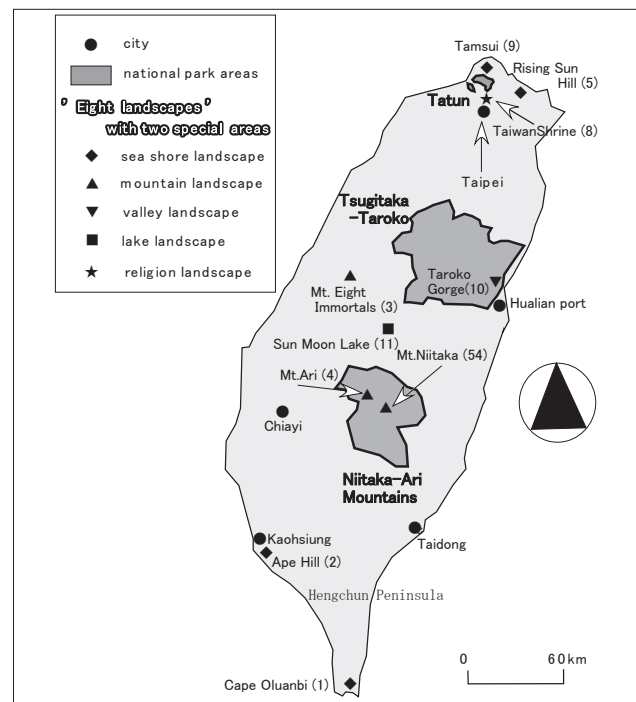


Figure 1 Map showing the locations of the Taiwanese National Parks and the Eight Scenic Views of Taiwan under the Japanese colonial period (Adapted from 'National Park Map 1/500,000, January 1938)

Notes:

- 1) The national parks were established in 1937. The Eight Scenic Views were selected in 1927.
- 2) As special category was for the third and eighth views of the Eight Scenic Views of Taiwan, 10 views were selected in total.
- 3) The numbers in brackets to the right of the names of the Eight Scenic Views of Taiwan are their rankings according to a popularity survey.

this national park and became a source of debate for the designation of national parks in Taiwan. The area was being developed since 1904 as a part of the Colonial Government's plans for development, and forest management in the area had been conducted since the opening of the mountain railway in 1912. Logging management in this area was expected to gradually reach saturation, and the Taiwan Colonial Government was exploring other options in anticipation of the reduction in logging. One of the suggested options was the conversion of the area into a national park. In 1928, Tsuyoshi Tamura, Doctor of Forestry and an expert on national parks in Japan, was invited to do an investigation of the park, and it was decided that the area should be converted into a national park with the aim of attracting tourists.

Furthermore, promotion activities were actively carried out in the local area for the establishment of the national park. The conversion of the Mount Ali area into a national park was focused on the

starting point of the mountain railway in the city of Chiayi (see Figure 1). Because of the large-scale sawmill, established in 1914, the economy of this area was not only based on the sugar industry but also on forestry. However, around the time when Chiayi was granted city status, both these industries were beginning to stagnate. As a means of stimulating the economy, both the public and private sectors called for Chiayi to be identified as the starting point of the mountain railway to Mount Ali, which was a candidate area for conversion to a national park at that time. The movement to establish a national park in the area thus picked up pace. Promotion activities were also being conducted for Tsugitaka-Taroko National Park and Tatun National Park in the neighbouring municipalities of Hualien port city and Taipei state. The selection of national parks in Taiwan was considered as a possible means of improving local economies by building up tourist industries similar to those found on the mainland Japan.

(2) Landscape of the national parks and the eight scenic views of Taiwan

It was the National Parks Investigation Committee established by the Taiwan Colonial Government in 1933 that undertook the investigation of the candidate national park areas. The majority of the

members of this committee were officials from the Taiwan Colonial Government. The National Parks Investigation Committee made decisions based on the mainland legislation and policies, and the national park selection criteria were identical to those applied on the mainland Japan, as shown in Table 1. Based on these criteria, the National Parks Investigation Committee chose three locations as candidate national park areas for the reasons given in Table 2. These three locations were almost identical to the final areas that were selected.⁴⁾

Considering the reasons for selection, it is clear that all the candidate areas were chosen because they were mountainous landscape areas and that the committee was drawn to the primary forests and tropical plants of their landscapes. There is also a reference regarding the potential of the areas becoming tourist spots. Regarding the selection of Tatun National Park, however, it is possible that they did not actually adopt the same selection criteria as those for the mainland Japan. Tatun National Park was noted as being 'not a vast landscape' and having 'a landscape unique to Taiwan with the island's only volcano'. It is difficult to comprehend how Tatun could then satisfy the committee's conditions for a national park because they stipulated that the area would be 'a vast landscape with a natural environment that suitably represents Japan'.

In order to further clarify the characteristics of

Table 1 Selection Criteria for National Parks in Japan

Essential conditions
(A national Park shall be) a vast natural scenic site that is sufficiently representative of the nation's landscape; an excellent grand landscape that evokes citizen's interest and, move those who visit: is sufficient to proudly present to other nations and to attract foreign tourists . Those who meet the above description must meet the following criteria: 1) represents and exceed all equivalent landscapes; 2) is a natural landscape that covers a vast area; and 3) its geography and geomorphology is of grand scale or of an excellent aesthetic quality with varied scenery
Additional conditions
1) The natural elements are suitable to health and welfare of the citizens and to various purposes; this means that the elements such as the air, sunlight, climate, geography and water are facilitative of health, and can be utilized for a number of purposes such as mountain climbing, viewing, walking, fishing, hot spring, camping and lodging; 2) The site is abundant with resources suitable for education and research such as temples and shrines, historic monuments, natural monuments and natural phenomena; 3) The land owners are supportive of the establishment of a park; 4) The location is convenient for general public to use; 5) Little conflicts and resistance is expected from industries such as hydro power, agriculture, forestry, cattle farming, fisheries and mining; and 6) Existing facilities will be used beneficially for national park plan, and advantages are foreseen for further development plans and management.

Source: Taiwan National Parks Committee (ed), 'Minutes of The First Meeting of the Taiwan national Parks Committee' (Taiwan National Parks Committee, 1936: 14-16)

Table 2 Outline of the three candidate sites and reasons for selection

Park	Outline and reasons for selection (Exerts)
The Daiton National Park,	Approx. 9,350ha (Smallest in Japan's National Park system). Although it is not of a vast scale, the site, as the only volcano on the island, excels as a distinct landscape of Taiwan having a number of advantageous qualities for utilisation; many areas of pristine and natural forests are intact with abundant flora and fauna, forming a landscape with distinct tropical vegetation; variety of sites for advantageous utilization such as hot spring, mountain climbing and camping; suitable as a summer resort being on a high plateau located on the island's northern most point; with proximity to Taipei, it has advantageous condition for location and transport.
The Tsugitaka-Taroko National Park	Approx. 257,090ha (Largest area in Japan's National Park System). The site presents a distinct scenery as a mountain range formed with sedimentary rock and metamorphic rock that is representative of the island and Japan, and the views of its mountains, valleys and coastlines are truly outstanding in international standard; Many vast pristine and natural forest areas that fill the park clearly illustrate forest physiognomy ranging the lower topical to the higher frigid zones; Various ways of utilization include viewing, mountain climbing, camping, fishing, hot spring.... also suitable for a longer stay.
The Niitaka National Park	Approx. 187,800ha. The mountain range with Japan's highest peak Niitaka with the splendor landscape formed with sedimentary rock, presents an outstanding scenery of the nation; This candidate contains the equivalent quality with the Tsugitaka-Taroko National Park, each presents distinct scenery in its geography, topography, geological features or vegetation; The vegetation particularly presents distinct landscape, ranging from the lower tropical forest to the higher frigid wood; Suitable for climbing, viewing, camping and hot spring bathing, and particularly as a summer resort on a plateau; Mount Ari is already equipped with substantial tourist facilities.

Source: Taiwan National Parks Committee (ed), 'Minutes of The First Meeting of the Taiwan national Parks Committee' (Taiwan National Parks Committee, 1936: 16-21)

the Taiwan national parks, I would like to compare them with the eight scenic views of Taiwan selected in 1927 by the Taiwan Nichinichi Shimpō newspaper, a Japanese language newspaper circulating in Taiwan at the time. The public were asked to 'select the beauty spots that represent the Taiwan' with the aim of 'finding the hidden beauty in landscapes and finding unknown scenic spots to introduce them to the public' and 'to advertise these spots at both home and abroad as places of interest that possess the true natural beauty of this beautiful enchanted island'. They were asked to submit their choices by postcard. Based on public opinion, the eight scenic views of Taiwan were selected following deliberation by a review committee. The review criteria specified the following: '(1) it should be a characteristic of Taiwanese scenery; (2) it must not be small in scale; (3) should have convenient transport links and it should be possible to install facilities in the future; (4) it should have historical landmarks and natural monuments and (5) it should be in line with considerations of the geographical spread across the whole island'. The Taiwan Shrine and Mount Niitaka were classified separately as a sacred area and spirited peak, respectively. The Eight Immortals Mountain, Cape Eluanbi, Taroko Gorge, Tamsui, Ape Hill, Mount Ali, Rising Sun Hill and Sun Moon Lake were selected as the eight scenic views.⁵⁾

At this time, the eight chosen scenic views were characterised as coastal landscapes (Tamsui, Rising Sun hill, Ape Hill and Cape Eluanbi), a gorge (Toroko Gorge), a lake (Sun Moon Lake) and landscapes of mountains and beautiful forests (Mount Ali and the Eight Immortals Mountain).⁶⁾ Only four of the locations, including the separately classified Mount Niitaka, were 'mountains, valley or forest' landscapes, which are landscapes characteristic of the national parks in Japan, and the other remaining locations were coastal landscapes or other landscapes not typical of Japanese national parks. Furthermore, in the poll ranking (see Figure 1), Mount Niitaka was ranked 54th and obtained a fairly low number of votes, while Oluanpi, a tropical landscape area located in the south, was ranked at the top. It is considered that the selection of Mount Niitaka by the review committee was of a political reason; although it did not receive much support from the citizens of Taiwan, Mount Niitaka was given a special status of sacred mountain for its symbolised nationalism and a close affinity with Japan.

From this comparison of the national parks of Taiwan and the eight scenic views of Taiwan, it is clear that only the mountainous areas of the eight scenic views considered to represent Taiwan were chosen as national parks (see Figure 1). Specifically, Oluanpi, which received the most votes in the poll,

was not included as a candidate national park area, although Mount Niitaka was identified as having important aspects of a national park. While it is obvious that the landscapes that represent Taiwan and those that represent Japan are not necessarily the same, only mountainous landscape areas were selected as national parks. Furthermore, Tatun National Park does not include any of the eight scenic views of Taiwan. It is then doubtful that the landscape was representative of the vast landscapes of Japan, nor was it really thought to represent Taiwan.

3. Controversy surrounding the candidate national park areas in Taiwan

(1) Discussion at the first meeting of the National Parks Committee

The Taiwan National Parks Committee was launched in 1935 by Tsuyoshi Tamura and officials from the office of the Taiwan Colonial Government, the teaching staff from the Taipei Imperial University and the local businesspeople. The Governor-General was appointed chairperson. The first meeting of the committee was convened in February 1936 in which the candidate areas selected by the National Parks Investigation Committee and the reasons for their selection given in Table 2 were deliberated.

The participating members of the meeting raised several doubts regarding the proposals made by the National Parks Investigation Committee. One matter raised was the wish to reduce the number of national parks. Palaeontologist and professor at Taipei Imperial University, Ichiro Hayasaka, pointed out that the two candidate areas of Niitaka-Ali Mountains and Tsughitaka Taroko were very similar and that because the natural environment between them was unspoilt and intact, they should be combined into one candidate area. Furthermore, other members argued that rather than having three national parks, one representative national park would express the Taiwanese sense of identity more effectively. However, Tamura emphasised that domestic national parks are set up according to a fixed policy and responded that the number of national parks was suitable.

Hayasaka also highlighted the importance of taking into account uniqueness when considering

national parks and that in order to attract tourists from mainland Japan, it was necessary to choose landscapes that could not be seen anywhere else but in Taiwan. He also suggested that the Oluanpi area located in the south of Taiwan was rich with coral reefs and had a 'tropical landscape geographically characteristic of tropical Taiwan' and should therefore be converted into a national park. Officials from the Taiwan Colonial Government rejected this opinion and stated the following: 'a relatively large proportion of mountainous areas was present in Japan to enhance the training of the minds and bodies of Japanese citizens'.

Professors from Taipei Imperial University argued that the focus should be on preserving rare natural environments; however, Tamura responded as follows: 'We have a general policy for national parks to select a large-scale landscape that is extremely beneficial to the health of our citizens' and claimed that this policy did not include 'natural monuments, scenic spots or tourist spots'.⁷⁾

As a result, the opinions of the intellectuals who lived in Taiwan were ignored and the three candidate areas that were originally proposed were chosen. This dispute centres on issues whether or not they represent Japanese or Taiwanese characteristics regarding the number, location and landscape of national parks in Taiwan. It thus highlights the apparent conflict in opinions among the office of the Taiwan Colonial Government that chose the three candidate areas; Tamura, who was involved in the decision; and other members of the committee such as the professors from Taipei Imperial University and the businesspeople resident in Taiwan. This issue was particularly prominent during the exchange of opinions on tourism, preservation of nature, and mental and physical training that was mentioned in the debate over whether or not to choose the tropical landscape area of Hengchun Peninsula, which included Oluanpi, or only to choose mountainous landscape areas. During the first meeting of the Taiwan National Parks Committee, they insisted on choosing national parks in Taiwan that were landscape areas representative of Japan, thus neglecting the characteristics of Taiwan's identity, climate, tourism and natural preservation.

(2) Ichiro Hayasaka's objections to the choice of national park candidates

Later, Hayasaka gave an academic perspective on issues relating to the conclusion of the committee meeting. He specifically mentioned 'In imperial Japan, the vast tropical natural landscapes characteristic of Taiwan have not been considered in spite of the extremely earnest insistence of academicians from every direction'. He also argued that conserving the environment by converting the area in southern Taiwan into a national park and using this area as a tourist attraction was supported by Japanese researchers resident in Taiwan: 'I insisted that the real tropical corner of Taiwan, the area that covers Oluanpi south of the latitude that extends from Taidong to Ping dong and Kaohsiung, be preserved for citizens of the future to enjoy and that various facilities are required for ordinary people to holiday there and this insistence was met with plenty of support from experts in botany and zoology because of these special phases'.⁸⁾ He also argued, stating 'The argument that it is not necessary to imitate America or Europe in any way is still voiced today. However, ideally the national parks will attract not only citizens from one's own country but also tourists from distant foreign countries. Hence, when establishing national parks, it is necessary to think more internationally'.

⁹⁾ In other words, Hayasaka insisted on creating national parks that were 'the essence of Taiwan', whilst stressing the importance of the Taiwanese and global spatial scale. In contrast, it is thought that Tamura, in order to emphasise the importance of the national spatial scale and push through the selection of national parks typified by mountainous landscapes, removed the places of scenic beauty, natural monuments legislation, and tourism from the selection criteria. He thought that including these in the criteria may give rise to opposition to the selected landscapes, and he refused to recognise the selection of the tropical landscape in southern Taiwan as a national park, which symbolised the uniqueness of Taiwan. Therefore, by selecting only mountainous landscape areas as the candidate national park areas, the national parks chosen were mountainous landscapes and not the tropical landscapes characteristic of Taiwan, which were the most popular in the list of the eight scenic views of the Taiwan poll, and with Hayasaka

and his fellow academicians.

4. The imaginative geographies of tropical landscapes and mountainous landscapes in Taiwan

(1) Tsuyoshi Tamura's thoughts on the tropical landscape and the transformation of these thoughts

In the aforementioned manner, Tamura denied the designation of the tropical landscape area as a national park. However, in an account of his travels regarding the Mount Ali Park Investigation in 1928, 'The landscape of Taiwan', he records that he set out for Taiwan with certain preconceptions:

Once, on a visit to America I landed in Hawaii. The sky, the sea, the plants and animals and the other natural features were all rich with the intense light, colours and fragrances characteristic of a southern country. When I saw the actualisation of this so-called paradise as we on earth would imagine it, I seriously thought that this is a place I would like to visit time and again given the opportunity.... As I imagine it, if we were to search for a place within our borders that had a climate and landscape that closely resembles Hawaii, it would surely be the island of Taiwan.¹⁰⁾

In this way, Tamura projected the image of the southern paradise he experienced in Hawaii onto Taiwan because of their similar 'climate and landscapes'. Even when he arrived in Taiwan, he was drawn to the plants that constituted the tropical landscape'. In another paper he wrote in 1928, he mentioned the following about Taiwan: 'the south, as an extreme landscape area, is a distinctive area with the rare tropical scenery of a southern country'. He cited the 'southern area tropical scenery' as a distinctive feature of the landscape. He also pointed out that this was 'one of the distinctive features that would heighten the curiosity of those people that have thoroughly investigated the southernmost tip of Japan'.¹¹⁾ Then, in 1934, he published a study titled, 'Taiwan as a tourist spot', which is summarised below.

One of the most important elements of Taiwan as a tourist spot is the fact it is a single island isolated from the mainland Japan and the Asian continent that is a land of everlasting summer....

A typical tourist experiences the greatest joy from being inspired by an exotic environment far removed from their daily life. For people from the mainland Japan, Taiwan is a truly exotic island and provides natural and cultural sights that are not even imagined in the whole of the mainland Japan. For people from the mainland Japan, the Taiwan closely resembles the Pacific Ocean paradise of Hawaii.

He claims that Taiwan's status as an enchanted land, which resembles the paradise of Hawaii, is an important element in envisioning Taiwan as a tourist spot and argues that for this reason, 'For people from the mainland Japan, Taiwan is an exotic island'. Tamura, who sought a southern tropical landscape that stimulates the imagination, considered this landscape to be an important element in promoting tourism in Taiwan and specifically identified 'Oluanpi at the southernmost tip of the island' as a vast landscape suitable for tourists in the lowlands of Taiwan. In other words, Tamura actually noticed the tropical landscape of Taiwan before Hayasaka and argued that it could become a tourist spot centred on the appeal of Oluanpi.

Tamura also expressed another view of tourism as follows: 'From the point of view of tourists from the mainland Japan, they are of course all going to want to come into contact with aspects that are unique to Taiwan to an extent'. He argued, stating 'We must plan so that the natural environment and culture of the landscape are not damaged by developing and utilising this landscape', and he warned against modern tourism development: 'In particular, I would like meticulous attention to be paid to not turning the landscape into a Japanese landscape or westernising the landscape'. For this reason, because 'the ultimate requirement for the physical environment of the Taiwanese landscape is to preserve the pure appearance of the Taiwanese landscape and culture as much as possible', he insisted that, in order to protect the tourist spots, one should ensure their preservation by 'setting up national, state and city parks' and introducing the 'Historical Spot, Scenic Beauty and Natural Monument Preservation Law for local objects with academic value'.¹²⁾ In this way, Tamura was claiming the importance of Taiwan's uniqueness whilst focusing on the tropical landscape and

tourism, and considering various preservation systems such as national parks. His assertion was the same as Hayasaka's, but earlier.

Following this, however, Tamura's interpretation of the relationship between national parks and tourism gradually changed. In 1928, during the Mount Ali Investigation, he focused on the function of the national park as a tourist spot, but around 1930, he began to focus on the function of the national park for Japanese citizens and the contribution the national park could make to the nation. In 1935, when he visited Taiwan, he explained, stating 'A national park is generally defined by the fact it contributes to the health, recreation and enlightenment of people', and had come to describe national parks as 'parks for the people and not for the primary purpose of attracting tourists'.¹³⁾ As mentioned earlier, Tamura subsequently emphasised the homogeneous criteria for the nation and denied the value of national parks as tourist spots at the first meeting of the Taiwan National Parks Committee. He selected only mountainous landscape areas and stated after the committee meeting that it would be better for the Onaupi area to be designated as a Historical Spot, Scenic Beauty and Natural Monument. He also contributed an article titled 'The Mission of the National Parks of Taiwan' to the July 1939 'Taiwan National Parks' issue of the magazine 'The Forests of Taiwan' in which he stated the following:

In Taiwan, where the climate and natural features are completely different than those in the mainland Japan, it is easy to seek out the unique landscapes. However, if these landscapes are not outstanding, it is not ultimately judged necessary to make them national parks.

Our focus should be on our citizens. Bringing them into contact with nature will invigorate their minds and train their bodies to be stronger. In particular, the minds and bodies of those that live in the lowlands of Taiwan tend to weaken and they lose their vitality and spirit. Providing a change of scenery in the cool air of the highlands will regenerate their minds and bodies and introduce them to a majestic landscape, and a more magnificent climate should not be neglected for a moment. The world has a tendency to confuse national parks with tourist spots, but this is a grave misconception. A

national park is the healthiest of rest areas, the best equipped of outdoor athletics fields and the most sacred of areas for mental training and spiritual improvement. This physical environment is extremely appropriate for the residents that refer to Taiwan as a colony and do not need many words to describe it.¹⁴⁾

Here Tamura describes the tropical landscape of the lowlands as not being 'outstanding' but rather a merely 'unique landscape' that evokes otherness. He points out that this leads the residents to experience 'a weakening of the body and mind and a loss of vitality and spirit'. In other words, Tamura perceived the tropical landscape as an ambivalent landscape, which possessed a unique otherness that would attract tourists, but was also a torrid environment not suitable to represent Japan. Then, Tamura, who states that the focus for national parks should be the citizens, stating 'Bringing them into contact with nature will invigorate their minds and train their bodies to be stronger', denied that national parks were tourist spots and, in doing so, eliminated the 'unique landscape' of the tropical lowlands from the selection of national parks. Also, he emphasised the contrast between the torrid environment of the lowlands with the 'cool air of the highlands', which 'will regenerate their minds and bodies' through their 'more magnificent climate'. He describes the highlands as 'healthy rest areas', 'outdoor athletics fields' and 'a sacred area for mental training and spiritual improvement', positioning them as national parks.

In this argument, the significance of the mountains is focused on 'the residents who refer to Taiwan as a colony' and the disparity within a spatial scale, which is Taiwan. The 'Mount Ali Investigation Report', published in 1930, opposed this, stating 'the Mount Ali landscape management should not be content with the area being a park for residents of Taiwan but should prepare the area to succeed as an international landscape and rest area'.¹⁵⁾ This statement also failed to correspond with the discussion at the committee meeting, which emphasised homogenous national criteria. After the first meeting of the Taiwan National Parks Committee, not only did Tamura draw attention to the significance of mountains in Taiwan and construct the imaginative geography of the tropical landscape as that of a torrid environment, but he

also added the issue of the mental and physical improvement of Taiwanese residents to the overall mission of national parks in Taiwan.

(2) The minds and bodies of the colonial residents and the imaginative geographies of a mountainous landscape

As alluded to by Tamura, at that time, the Taiwan lowlands were often acknowledged as having a torrid environment because of the impact of the theory of environmental determinism, similar to Huntington's¹⁶⁾ arguments concerning the degeneration of the minds and bodies of white people in tropical environments. Furthermore, most of the mountain areas were 'aboriginal lands' occupied by 'aborigines' until the completion of the '5-year Aboriginal Governance Plan' in 1910. People from the mainland Japan were frequently killed by aborigines, referred to as 'aboriginal murders', and the areas aroused feelings of fear and were referred to as 'headhunting villages'.¹⁷⁾ Because of anxieties regarding the 'aboriginal murders', and the delay in mountain development, mountain climbing in Taiwan did not start until 1921. The Taiwan Alpine Club, for example, was not founded until 1926.

Once the mountain ranges were safe for the Japanese to set foot on, a professor at the Department of Agriculture and Forestry at Taipei Imperial University, Shigeru Aoki, provided a suggestion by stating 'The Japanese people, whether they are government officials or ordinary citizens, should be forced to go to Mount Ali at least during the hot season', and informed the Taiwan Colonial Government that by doing this, 'Japanese people will be prevented from turning Taiwanese, both spiritually and physically'.¹⁸⁾ Mount Ali was given the status of a place to escape from the lowlands, which would prevent the Japanese from 'turning Taiwanese'.¹⁹⁾ Furthermore, the Tatun mountains area close to Taipei City was also rapidly developed as a place to escape from the torrid lowland environment; this, along with the construction of two hot spring resorts, Beitou and Souzan, transformed it into a place of great significance. With both these areas in mind, in 1927, Doctor of Forestry and the Director of Forestry at the Central Research Institute, Ryoza Kanehira, argued, stating 'Taiwan has a tropical

landscape and therefore would benefit from a place that is above sea level and offers the opportunity for ordinary people to take an excursion',²⁰⁾ and encouraged the designation of the Tatun mountains area as a national park. In the Tatun National Park Plan published in 1929, Seiroku Honda, who, like Tamura, played an important role in the designation of national parks in Japan, specifically pointed out the value of escaping from the torrid environment of the tropics to the mountains to prevent the degeneration of the mind and body and at the same time spoke of the possibility of the Tatun area becoming a national park. 'Even if you always put your heart and strength into maintaining a healthy body and a strong mind in tropical areas like Taipei City, there is a possibility that you will become overwhelmed by the intense and humid heat and this can lead to feelings of idleness and both physical and mental exhaustion. If this is the case, I would sincerely recommend and admire the idea of choosing a cool area among the mountains, such as at the foot of Mount Tatun, and preventing the degeneration of the body and mind by avoiding the heat and restoring energy'.²¹⁾ Even at the meeting of National Parks Investigation Committee in 1933, an official from the Taiwan Colonial Government expressed the following opinion: 'In Taiwan the air, sunlight and heat are different than those in the mainland Japan. In this land of intense heat, it is necessary to add an element of coolness in plans such as establishment of national parks. It is important to attract foreign tourists, but the health and welfare of the islanders should be the foremost priority, thus choosing national parks in locations that satisfy all and are close at hand for everybody is of the deepest significance.' This was a 'caution to all present'²²⁾ but it was not officially written down in the selection reasons. However, it is thought that the proximity of Tatun's mountains to a large (sub)tropical city was a key reason behind it being selected as a national park candidate area.

The mountain landscapes in Taiwan were the places that most resembled the mainland Japan, and it has often been pointed out that these areas awakened nostalgia for the homeland among people from the mainland Japan. Tamura spoke on this subject in 1928, stating 'It goes without saying that Mount Tatun is the only volcano in Taiwan and even though there are volcanic landscapes

throughout the mainland Japan, there are few landscapes like this in Taiwan. If people from the mainland Japan have some kind of longing for the mainland Japan, they can visit Tatun and be reminded of the beautiful landscapes of the mainland Japan'.²³⁾ There were also similar points raised regarding Mount Ali. For example, Chief Editor of the Taiwanese *Nichinichi Shimpō* newspaper, Osawa Sadakichi, reported 'Mount Ali has similar weather and a similar climate to the mainland Japan and the atmosphere of the natural scenery there evokes memories of the natural environment of the mainland Japan and also increases the feeling of nostalgia further'.²⁴⁾ It is often pointed out that at that time, the second generation Japanese who were born in Taiwan were referred to as 'Taiwan-produced'; as the Taiwanese rarely climbed mountains,²⁵⁾ it is possible that this is one element underlying their lack of nostalgia for the homeland.

This Japanese-style mountainous landscape had become an aesthetic and political space that evoked feelings of nationalism in the Japanese people. This kind of perception of the mountains is observed in Aoki's suggestion in 1928 that it was not the lowlands of Taiwan, which 'lack the appeal of the changing of the four seasons and are equipped for the reality of an everlasting summer' but it was 'the view of Taiwan floating in the ocean with the highest mountain in Japan, Mount Niitaka, at the centre that we cannot forget'. He stated that by travelling to the mountains, 'the Japanese national character of superiority and elegance is cultivated', and argued, stating 'You must not look at Taiwan as just a bleak landscape. If you travel vertically you will reach a superior landscape'.²⁶⁾

Previously, I pointed out that Aoki supported the use of Mount Ali in order to prevent the Japanese living in Taiwan from 'turning Taiwanese'; however, at that time of turning Taiwanese, the following was also stated: 'The risk is from the influence of the environment. People from the mainland living in Japan will, at some point, turn Taiwanese and will not be ashamed to use anti-Japanese speech or behaviour'.²⁷⁾ It was thought that 'turning Taiwanese' not only represented a spiritual and physical degeneration for the Japanese living in Taiwan but also a political move against Japan. For this reason, the tropical landscape of the

lowlands was portrayed as a place that should be avoided, a 'bleak landscape' as Aoki characterises it. In contrast to this tropical landscape, the mountainous landscapes were portrayed as 'superior landscapes' because they served the political purpose of evoking the 'Japanese national character'; consequently, there was a strong tendency to position them as significant areas.

It is evident from the above points that the mountainous landscapes in Taiwan were portrayed as 'Japanese-style' areas and were important for the imperialistic purpose of improving the health of the minds and bodies of the Japanese citizens living in the torrid environment of the tropical landscape areas whilst improving their sense of Japanese identity at the same time. As mentioned previously, this awareness was also actively debated at the discussion relating to national parks in Taiwan and greatly influenced the selection of candidate areas at the National Parks Investigation Committee, as well as Tamura's definition of Taiwanese national parks following the first meeting of the National Parks Committee. As a consequence, in 'The National Parks of Taiwan and their Mission', published by the Director of The Ministry of Home Affairs after the selection of the national parks in 1938, Deguchi stated, 'The lowlands of Taiwan belong to the tropics and subtropics, and the landscape and climate has a tendency to erode physical health and drain the spirits. It is necessary to make a habit of or use the summer holidays to enter the bosom of nature and rest the body and mind or cultivate simple and strong characteristics by mountain climbing and camping to become prepared for selfless devotion'.²⁸⁾ Through this statement, he added the physical and mental attuning of the Japanese and escape from the adverse environment in the lowlands to the significance of national parks in Taiwan.

5. Conclusion

The points clarified in this paper are summarised below:

1) It is thought that initially, selection of the national park candidate areas in Taiwan similar to the selection of those in the mainland Japan was greatly influenced by the development of specific areas for tourism. It was also observed that introduction of the criteria that were applied for

the selection of national parks on the mainland Japan led to the selection of mountainous landscapes. In this way, the selection of national park candidate areas in Taiwan was basically considered an extension of the process on the mainland Japan. However, Tatun National Park, which cannot be called a vast landscape, was selected as a candidate area under different criteria to that applied on the mainland Japan. Furthermore, in a comparative study of the eight scenic views of Taiwan and the national park candidate areas, the mountainous landscapes were associated with nationalism, and were not thought to represent Taiwan by its residents.

2) This misrepresentation became obvious in the discussion during the first meeting of the National Parks Committee. Intellectuals living in Taiwan linked the attraction of tourists to the preservation of nature and argued for the regional identity of Taiwan. Specifically, they sought the conversion of the tropical landscape of southern Taiwan into a national park. However, emphasis was placed on the national spatial scale, and these arguments were rejected, caused in part by Tamura's denial of the importance of tourism and the preservation of nature.

3) Furthermore, it is apparent that the mountains in Taiwan were given a different significance to those on the mainland because they existed in a colony located in the (sub)tropics. At that time, the concept of racial decay due to the tropical environment and the longing for the motherland were linked to the theory of environmental determinism. The mountains were considered an aesthetic and political space that evoked feelings of nationalism, in addition to ensuring that the mind and body were in harmony with the Japanese identity. It is for this reason that Tatun, which was small in scale and could not be called a vast landscape, was chosen for its volcanic landscape similar to that of the mainland and its proximity to the large city of Taipei.

4) Tamura initially spoke of the imaginative geography of the tropical landscapes as a paradise and discussed the possibility of Taiwan as a tourist spot, contrasting with Honda's perception of the torrid landscape of the (sub)tropics. Neither of these perceptions were any different to the stereotypical representations elsewhere. For this reason, Tamura was opposed to the selection of

tropical landscapes as national parks and rather chose mountainous areas that would recreate the authenticity of Japan.

5) It is thought that the reason Tamura was forced to deny the importance of tourism and oppose Hayasaka's opinion was because a specific spatial scale did not exist for the otherness sought by tourists. In other words, although it was important to emphasise tourism in order to discuss capitalistic regional development, it also raised the issue of the possibility of dissolving the national spatial scale.

6) As a result of studying the process of selecting national parks in Taiwan during the Japanese colonial period, it is evident that the significance attached to the landscape of the national parks and candidate areas changed. The relationships between identity, tourism, imaginative geography, emotion, and politics continuously changed amidst the ambivalence, contradiction and social context exhibited by the space that is the national parks. This is truly apparent in the changes in Tamura's perception, which had a significant contribution to the national park selection. Furthermore, at around the same time, many concepts regarding these relationships and their significance depended on positionality. It was found that the relationships involved in the selection of national parks changed dynamically and were extremely multilayered.

Notes

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- 2) Lefebvre, H. *La production de l'espace*, Hideharu Saito trans., Aoki Shoten, 2000: 425-572
- 3) The 12 designated national parks were Akan, Daisetsuzan, Towada, Nikko, Fuji-Hakone, Chubu-Sangaku, Yoshino-Kumano, Daisen, Seto-Naikai, Aso, Unzen and Kirishima.
- 4) The Niitaka candidate national park area was finally named the Niitaka-Ali Mountain National Park.
- 5) *Taiwan Nichinichi Shimpō*, 30th May 1927
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- 10) Tamura, T. *The Landscape of Taiwan*, Yuzankaku, 1928
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- 16) Huntington, E. *Climate and Civilisation*, Masato Kanzaki trans., Chugai Culture Association, 1922
- 17) Suzuki, H. National Parks and Aboriginal Management, *Taiwan Forestry* 123, 1936: 210-212
- 18) Aoki, S. Impressions of Alishan, *Taiwan Newsletter* 84, 1926, 42-50
- 19) 'Turning Taiwanese' was often used at that time to mean physically and spiritually turning Taiwanese. Based on the aforementioned environmental determinism, it refers to the racial decay of Japanese people due to the tropical climate.
- 20) Refer to citation 6) page 3
- 21) Honda, S. *Commemorative Issue Overview of the Design for Daiton National Park*, Taihoku-shu, 1934: 3
- 22) *Taiwan Nichinichi Shimpō*, 5th September 1934
- 23) Tamura, T. A Landscape Architect's Perspective on Taiwan, (Ishihara, K eds. *30 years of the Taiwan Nichinichi Shimpō*, 1929): 135-147
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- 26) Aoki, S. Let's look at Taiwan's landscape vertically not just horizontally, *Taiwan Mountains* 2, 1928: 104-106
- 27) Miyagawa, J. *Taiwan Uncut*, Horai Shoin, 1934
- 28) Ideguchi, K. The national Parks of Taiwan and their Mission, *Taiwan Newsletter* 218, 1938: 90-95